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## **Historia de la arqueología de Teotihuacán**

**Research Year:** 1996

**Culture:** Teotihuacán

**Chronology:** Early Classic

**Location:** México

**Site:** Teotihuacán

During the year of work under the auspices of FAMSI, I have completed my investigation of Teotihuacán during its historical period, between the 16th and the 20th century. The central theme of the study was to understand the role that paper records played in the knowledge of the prehispanic past of the site, as it was seen and interpreted until the 19th century, and then how such records were used by archaeology to know about indigenous Mexican cultures. It was interesting to discover that the importance of the site was much greater than what was supposed upon outlining the project.

From this work, I have already produced some articles that have been sent to specialized magazines and will be published; the entire work will be published in the near future.

For centuries, Teotihuacán was the largest and most continuous site of the Mexican Altiplano, and continued playing an important role from the 16th century, so that its destruction does not mean that its history is lost. The collective memory has produced a double road: on the one hand, what the indigenous inhabitants of the region were recalling or were imagining had occurred; for the other, what the new European culture was beginning to query and learn what had happened; each were part of the process of construction of the necessary global history to explain the new social reality and economy. And, since the second middle of the 19th century, many of the first antiquarians and the more recent archaeologists centered their interest in Teotihuacán, that it was the fruit of many excavations and studies of all types, has produced a huge bibliography up to the present time. The theories, models, and interpretations which have emerged relating to this site have been fundamental for the comprehension of all Mesoamerica, and the histories of such works are currently found in archaeological thought, the technological evolution of excavation and restoration, and the discussion, confirmation and/or rejection of the early theories. Teotihuacán is a central case in the development of the thoughts concerning not only ancient México, but also for the entire Americas.

This investigation has permitted clarification of certain ambiguous stages in the development of the knowledge regarding Teotihuacán: the early Mexican illustrations when Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora made the first excavation in the Pyramid of the Moon, the first plan by Boturini, and the later travelers that visited the city up to the

beginning of the 19th century. Special interest has been given to gathering the conferences and site plans from that epoch, and is included in an article (sent to press) on the history of the images and the iconography of the site and their relation with the forms of understanding the archaeologically excavated cities. Another article on the paper of the Comisión Científica Francesa y la Comisión Histórica del Valle de México between 1863 and 1865 has served to outline, with greater detail, the emergence of the scientific archaeology in Latin America, and I am completing another article about Leopoldo Batres and the works which were constructed in the site and then were destroyed.

The final result of this investigation has been important for me, since it has permitted me to work on material that I have gathered through many years of work from the archives and libraries of various countries. I was able to return to check collections in México—in February 1995—and the United States—April and May 1995—and I will be able to prepare all of that material in a form suitable for its publication and diffusion, so that other investigators of Mesoamerica are able to access it.

*Submitted 01/01/1996 by:*

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